



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Food and
Nutrition
Service

3101 Park
Center Drive
Alexandria, VA
22302-1500

DATE: November 28, 2012

MEMO CODE: SP 08 - 2013

SUBJECT: Request for Applications for Participation in Demonstration
Projects to Evaluate Direct Certification with Medicaid

TO: Regional Directors
Special Nutrition Programs
All Regions

State Directors
Child Nutrition Programs
All States

The Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) invites State agencies (SAs) that administer the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program to apply to participate in demonstration projects that will evaluate the effectiveness of conducting direct certification with the Medicaid program. Under the demonstration and pilot project authorities in Sections 9(b)(15) and 18(c) of the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, FNS is conducting and evaluating demonstration projects in selected States and local educational agencies. During the projects, eligible children are directly certified for free school meals based on income and participation information received from Medicaid agencies through automated data matching processes, with no further action required of the household. In 2011, six States (Alaska, Florida, Illinois, Kentucky, New York, and Pennsylvania) applied and were selected to participate in the demonstrations beginning school year (SY) 2012-2013. FNS plans to expand the projects and seeks applications from NSLP State agencies that would like to participate, or expand their participation, in the direct certification with Medicaid demonstrations beginning in SY 2013-2014.

Purpose of the Demonstration Projects

The purpose of the demonstration and evaluation projects is to:

- Determine the potential of direct certification with Medicaid to reach children who are eligible for free school meals, but are not certified to receive the meals;
- Determine the potential of direct certification with Medicaid to directly certify eligible children who are enrolled for free school meals based on a household application; and
- Provide an estimate of the effect on Federal costs and on participation in the school lunch and breakfast programs.

Application Process

The enclosed Request for Applications (RFA) includes complete instructions on the demonstration project application process, including information about data sharing agreements with Medicaid State agencies, cooperation with evaluation studies, and requirements that State agencies must be able to meet to be considered for participation. Appendix A of the RFA contains an application template which must be completed by each applicant and submitted along with other required documents, as instructed. For convenience, a Microsoft Word version of the RFA and application template (Appendix A) and other application documents will be available on the CND PartnerWeb. Notifications to FNS of the State agency's intent to apply are due by **December 21, 2012**, and applications must be received by FNS no later than **February 5, 2013**.

Applications may be submitted by email or regular mail, as follows:

Email: **ATTN:** Vivian Lees, Branch Chief
 CNStateSystems@fns.usda.gov

Mail to: Vivian Lees, Branch Chief
 State Systems Support Branch
 Child Nutrition Division
 USDA Food and Nutrition Service
 3101 Park Center Drive, Suite 640
 Alexandria, VA 22302

Webinar

On December 11, 2012, FNS will host a webinar for State agencies to provide information on the direct certification with Medicaid demonstration projects and the application process for participation. Information about the webinar will be distributed via the CND PartnerWeb in advance.

Please direct questions concerning the RFA and the application process to Jacqueline Mitchell at (703) 305-2744 or by email at jacqueline.mitchell@fns.usda.gov.

Sincerely,

Original Signed

Cynthia Long
Director
Child Nutrition Division

[Attachments](#)